

The Icelandic Canadian

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EDITORIAL

The other day, with the sun shining brightly overhead, a woman whom I met on the street had no other remark to make but that she hated the thought of winter. She was afraid it would be terrible, for already we had had two terrible winters in a row. Apparently she was so intent upon reviewing the shivers and distress of last January that even the most brilliant sunshine could not dispel her mental gloom. She was afraid of something which at the moment did not exist and which, for all she might know, she might never be called upon to endure.

That started me thinking about fear, its rightful place in the human emotional machinery and its harmful effects if permitted to overflow its proper channel. To begin with, fear is a complex thing, which takes many forms and works its way out to such disguised results that no one altogether escapes it. Which is not as bad for the world of men as it sounds. For fear is the elemental alarm system of the human organism. In primitive times men could never have survived if fear had not made them swift to scent danger.

Nor are we as yet ready to dispense with this natural safety device. It keeps us one jump ahead of racing motor cars, keeps us alert on sanitary measures, and more obedient to hygienic laws.

Fear of disasters, such as accidents, epidemics, plagues, etc., has replaced the fear of jungle enemies and tribal foes, but the machinery of warning is still the same.

Fear of war, and the horrors of war, may in time so play upon the public imagination as to create a formidable opinion in favor of world peace. Wholesome fear is not merely a negative virtue, but a positive force which drives mankind to constructive purposes and enterprises for the general good.

But, unfortunately, like all vital forces fear has its adverse side. The kind of fear to which my friend was lending a sunny hour, can and too often does, work ruin in human affairs. That sort of fear disparages all joy, because it is fleeting. Nothing good ever lasts! Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die. That is the psychology of fear introverts. To such poor souls, all effort seems useless. Before they even begin a job—even a good job grousing—they are perfectly sure nothing will come of it. They ought, by rights, to be still swinging from their tails from trees. For any individual who can subjugate his fear of tomorrow sufficiently to work conscientiously today, is not entitled to the benefits of social and moral advance.

Most great humanitarian benefits were won through blood and suffering, and stand an everlasting monument to the memory of men and women who not only surmounted fear but turned their terror of existing evils into energy to fight them. That is why persecution always defeats itself. Public burnings, the rack and wheel, only goaded righteous men to put an end to the tyrannic powers that sought to cow them by fear of torture and death.

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Somewhere in his essays, Emerson has this to say: "He has not learned the lesson of life who does not every day surmount a fear."

That, it seems to me, is a supremely helpful thought upon which to fix the mind in a dark hour. For, whatever you must fear, if you take hold of it with intelligent determination, you

are certain, by reason of the moral ferment the effort provokes in your consciousness, to discover a quite undreamed capacity for resource and endurance. And you will not only overcome the persisting fear of the moment, but build within yourself a reserve of courage and optimism for days to come.

—L.G.S.



Our Friends Across The Border

By W. J. LINDAL

We are one year old.

As we pause before embarking upon the second year, we endeavor, in the light of criticisms, to evaluate what if anything has been accomplished and where improvements can be made.

These criticisms have been at once friendly and constructive. That is very encouraging and provides the ample and yet only reward to those who are giving of their time and training in publishing the magazine.

From you, our friends across the border, some of the most constructive criticisms have come. You very properly remind us that you also are of Icelandic descent, have a common heritage with us, are quite as anxious as we to preserve the bonds with the past, and hence should be included in any worthy effort in the common field. We know that your criticisms are made in a most friendly spirit, you even assume in advance that we will at once welcome your co-operation and support. Anticipating such goodwill on our part, you point out that the co-operation and support can hardly be very whole-hearted and complete as long as the magazine is called "The Icelandic Canadian."

At the outset, purely in self defence, we should make it known that the question of support from across the border did not escape us when plans

were being made for our humble but yet somewhat courageous undertaking. Much as we wanted and needed your co-operation, we felt that we could not assume in advance that it would be forthcoming and that in our planning we could cover the wider field. Indeed, such an assumption on our part might have proved an embarrassment in the future.

But now that you have coupled with your criticisms offers of co-operation and assistance, we in turn ask that you go a step further and suggest in what ways the aims and objects of the magazine could or should be varied and what name, wider in scope, could be used so that the magazine could be of more effective service in the larger field.

But it is not enough on our part glibly to ask for your support nor is it enough for you to offer it. We should explore what it is that we have in common and in what respects our approaches may have to be different, and then, through frank exchanges of views, reach a basis of mutual understanding which will give strength to both in our determination to make an abiding contribution to the citizenship of our respective countries.

Paraphrasing and generalizing our aims and objects as outlined in the second issue of the magazine, let me,

with a few personal observations, put them as follows:

1. To assist in making the things of value in our Icelandic heritage a living part of ourselves as citizens of this country and thus improve the quality of our citizenship.

Here we are on common ground. Mutual assistance in the interpretation and evaluating of that heritage will prove to be equally beneficial to you as to us.

2 To provide an instrument by which the children of the ever increasing mixed marriages may be reached, and through which we would seek to instil in them a better knowledge and a keener appreciation of our common heritage.

This is a problem which you, no less than we, have to face. In Winnipeg the marriages are at least eighty per cent mixed. As there are actually fewer and relatively very much fewer Icelanders in the United States than here, the percentage in your country is no doubt higher. The method of approach to this natural trend is not to try to check these marriages, which is both wrong and impossible, but rather to create and maintain a medium through which the children of these marriages and their children for generations can be reached. One such medium is this magazine.

3 To provide a means whereby people of Icelandic extraction can become better acquainted with each other and thus strengthen the common bond of the past which in itself will strengthen bonds of the future.

No explanation is required. We desire to become better acquainted with you and see your point of view and we feel that you share those sentiments. Aside from personal contacts and visits

nothing can do more in this direction than exchanges of opinions and frank discussions of matters of mutual interest in a periodical supported by both.

4 To stimulate greater effort by making known to our readers the contributions of the people of Icelandic extraction to the highest and best type of citizenship.

This needs no enlargement. The magazine has from the outset made it a fixed policy to draw attention to the accomplishments of our leading men and women on both sides of the line.

5 To interpret the position we should take as Canadians as you interpret your position as citizens of the United States.

Here we are not quite on common ground. That does not mean that either group is wrong. Far from it. Both are right. But owing to inescapable incidents of history and geography the approaches must differ and on some vital points we must direct our thinking and sentiments along different channels.

Your position is one which is quite natural and follows established precedents in the building of a nation. There is only one national language; you have no political attachments in other parts of the world; there are no concentrated areas of specific religious faiths. This is bound to produce a strong unified type of national sentiment. That is why Americanism will always be of one texture; it will never be hyphenated.

Our position is so very different. It is an anomaly; nothing quite the same exists anywhere in the world, although South Africa and Switzerland come close to it.

Canada is a two-language and a two-culture country and at the same time is only a part of a much larger whole. In Canada, as in your country

(and here alone there is a parallel) there are many other national groups. They are gradually merging in the English speaking element. That tends to create an impression not anticipated, namely that the other nationally recognized major element, the French, is only one other national group. All this means that uniformity will not be a distinguishing mark of Canadianism; it will probably always be hyphenated.

Let us dwell on this thought for a moment.

In Canada about thirty per cent of the people are of French descent. They cling to their language, their Catholic faith and their French culture. They are determined to remain what they are and have been for over three hundred years. They are French-Canadians.

Canada is part of the British Commonwealth of Nations. To some Canada is part of an Empire—an Empire of high ideals and glorious achievements in the cause of free man, which rise in a crescendo to its greatest triumph, the Battle of Britain. The Canadianism of those who feel an inspiration in reflecting upon these achievements is bound to be hyphenated in spirit though there be no special word designating them.

Then there are the Canadians who are of neither Anglo-Saxon nor French descent. We ourselves are in this category. Each national group is proud of its language and tradition as indeed they are on your side of the line. Over there and here their thoughts and feelings have been of the past as well as of the future. Thus it is but natural that these people and their descendants should become Ukrainian-Cana-

dians, Polish-Americans, etc. Yet they quite properly call themselves and genuinely feel that they are Canadians and Americans. But that quality will be retained much longer in Canada than in the United States. There are two reasons for this. Canada will always lack the oneness of sentiment and approach which is inevitable on your side of the line. The openly admitted and practiced two-fold entity—British and French Canada—will provide encouragement to a multiple entity—a more clearly defined mosaic than anything you have.

Thus our position from the point of view of language, culture and outside political relationship is and always will be different to yours. But this difference in national content and hence national thinking, which in essence is only slight, is an asset and a source of strength. The very fact that there is a difference should be an encouragement to a closer relationship. Your greater unity will reinforce our diversity. Our greater diversity will soften your solidarity. Both attitudes of mind are necessary. Particularly so in the world of tomorrow when it is so essential to find a proper balance between the world outlook and the one national and local. We of Canada feel that to know you better will help to develop that essential two-fold quality of mind.

To strengthen the ties of a common language and tradition and to help develop that wider approach and outlook, we desire that the understanding be clear and the co-operation close between you of the United States and us of Canada.

Our magazine can be one of the links that bind us together.

We invite you to become a member of The Icelandic Canadian Club. Membership fee \$1.00 per year.

Treas.: Elin Eggertson,
919 Palmerston Ave., Winnipeg.

Amphitheatre of Democracy

By HÓLMFRÍÐUR DANIELSON

After this war is over the ambition of many a Western Icelander to visit the "Old Country" should not be so difficult of attainment.

For an Icelander who emigrated from his native land after having reached maturity, to visit Iceland is undoubtedly an exquisite pleasure. To his descendant brought up in this country what would such a visit mean? Would his be the superficial enjoyment of the tourist come to see the sights of a foreign land with no background of knowledge to aid in creating a lasting impression? Would he feel no kinship with the people, the land, the traditions of Iceland? Would the treasures gleaned on his visit be measured merely by the memory of an unbelievably beautiful sunset; a delicate blue haze trembling on the slope of a white-capped mountain; or a magnificent cataract sending up a translucent mauve mist as it plunges violently into an awesome gorge where granite pillars stand like bitter giants defying the majestic torrent to vanquish them and lay low in a watery grave? Or may he hope that a trip to the land of his forefathers will be, not only a delightful and exhilarating experience, but also an intimate spiritual adventure? He may, indeed! He need only fulfil one condition to be assured of this desired end. He must acquaint himself with the history and literature of Iceland; with its rich heritage of culture and courageous living. His mind must become attuned to a kinship with the proved and unbending spirit of a people who, because their literature lived and flourished among the high and the lowly alike, have been nurtured on a sub-conscious awareness of greatness; but whose heroic approach to life is tempered with the sensitive spiritual inwardness of the exploring mind.

To this visitor of Icelandic origin, having thus immersed himself in the traditions of the country, the most fascinating of Iceland's historic spots must inevitably be **Thingvellir**. Here were enacted gripping and powerful dramas of by-gone days. Here passed in review the colorful figures of high-born chieftains whose turbulent lives and bitter blood-feuds are so masterfully depicted in some of the Sagas. Honor, valour, wisdom, these things they cherished with a jealous passion. Balanced against these lasting qualities of mind and spirit—balanced against a name of good repute—the fleeting impermanence of human life and material possessions was valued at naught. This is graphically expressed in that famous stanza from **Hávamál**:

"Deyr fé,
deyja frændr,
deyr sjálfr et sama;
en orðstírr
deyr aldrigi
hveims sér góðan getr."

As the colonization of Iceland rapidly progressed the passion of the chieftains for law and justice soon brought them to the realization that a central government was needed to unite all the chieftaincies, or local **Things** under one rule. They also felt the need for the adoption of a general system of laws. Their minds moving with swift precision, they planned toward this goal. A learned man named Úlfþjótur, lately come from Norway, was in 927 assigned the task of preparing a code of laws. He spent three years in Norway studying with the aid of his uncle, Thorleifur **Spaki**, discriminating, revising and committing to memory the so called "Gula things lög".

While Ulfljótur was fulfilling his dif-

ficult mission abroad, the **goðar** chose his foster-brother, Grimur **Geitskór** to undertake a responsible quest, that of locating a suitable meeting place for the New National Assembly which was being created.

The place that Grimur selected was **Thingvellir** a spot of most impressive natural beauty and convenient location. Here in 930 was established the first of all Parliaments! Here in the presence of the assembled throng of **goðar**,— chieftains, and other freemen with their wives, families and followers, was proclaimed and adopted the code of laws known as "Ulfþjóts Law".

Here for 868 years the Althing assembled. Years of power and prestige; years of stubborn resistance to a foreign autocracy; years of progress; years of utter anguish and despair; years of clinging to a forlorn hope for freedom; years, all of them to test the temper of a nation's soul!

Here each year for two short summer weeks the plain of Thingvellir became a populous tent city. Not only were affairs of state settled; athletic tournaments were held; friends were greeted, marriage contracts arranged; Skálds and story tellers entertained with heroic epics of courts and kings; news were exchanged: perhaps with a traveler just returned from Europe, a viking fresh from glories won in Western Europe or a bold chieftain back from Greenland with a glowing description of that bleak and icy rock fortress to kindle anew the flame of adventure in valiant hearts.

Here the men of Iceland gathered when the glory of the Saga age had faded; when the monopoly of trade, the absolutism of foreign power, economic distress and natural catastrophies were strangling the life of the nation. Here in 1798 Lögberg looked down on the bowed and bitter spirits of a mere handful of fighters for freedom, gathered for the last time on this historic spot! The very stones wept

and wondered as they said 'good-bye' Was this the end? Were these descendants of a proud ancestral people vanquished, beaten, crushed by the heel of a foreign oppressor, laid low at last by unspeakable natural disasters? The worst was yet to come. As a climax to their bitter misfortunes, the loss of their national autonomy seemed complete, when on July 11th, 1800, Althing was dissolved by royal orders.

Across the moors and mountains there rode no more the haughty chieftains in splendid robes and glittering armour. But in her bitter hour arose some of Iceland's greatest sons! Inspired patriots whose creative genius set tolling in the minds of common men the incessant bells of liberty. Statesmen, the grandeur of whose moral strength and integrity of purpose towers above all time and space,— a blazing beacon for generations to come! And thus a nation chastened by adversity was made strong once more to fight for and win a new liberty, a new era of progress.

* * *

Traversing by bus or car the thirty-odd miles from Reykjavik to Thingvellir just gives us time to reach a state of pleasurable anticipation. But as we pass Thingvalla Lake our first reaction is one of disappointment because the scope of our vision is inadequate to take in the entire scene. We hope some day to return and from the air get a bird's-eye view of the long sunken plain sloping towards the lake, and guarded on both sides by dark, time-moulded rock walls patterned in prismatic basalt, whose sheer perpendicular drop reaches here and there a depth of one hundred feet.

North of Thingvalla Lake is a vast lava bed of prehistoric origin. Eons ago, as the molten lava cooled, the earth cracked open creating two mighty rifts, Almannagjá on the west and Hrafnagjá on the east. Then the plain between them sank down so that in

places the outer walls of the two chasms are three times as high as the inner walls.— We follow the road as it enters the shallow southern end of Almannagjá, the ancient road traversed by chieftains to the plains below.

Coming from the mountains north of the plain the turbulent Öxará river plunges through a narrow chasm and down the west wall of Almannagjá tumbles along its rocky bottom for a brief space, turns sharply and, leaving as its parting gift to Almannagjá a small swirling pool called Drekkingarhylur, breaks through a low section of the east wall to cascade in a series of little falls onto the plain. Having reached the plain the river, turning north once more, splits into two streams which merge again a little further down, thus enfolding in its arms the famous Öxarárhólmi. Because of further division of the streams the Hólmi has now become several small sandy islets. From here on the river flows through the plain past the present buildings—the Thingvallabær, the church, and the tourist house,—to lose itself in the placid waters of Thingvallavatn.

Directly east of Öxarárhólmi is a section of craggy lava formations cut off from the plain on three sides by deep narrow fissures, Flosagjá on the east and Nikulásargjá on the west. Here the growth of small brushwood and heather is particularly abundant and myriads of small wild flowers peek at us from the deep mossy recesses. Crossing on a narrow foot bridge which spans one of these fissures we gaze far down into ice-green depths of ageless water, so cold that the thought of it sends a shiver through us, so crystal clear that when we drop a króna into it, we can follow its zig zag course as it gracefully wends its way slowly, slowly, like thistle-down in the breeze to the bottom where it flutters to rest amidst other coins of all descriptions, from many lands.

Standing guard in this craggy strong-

hold accessible only by a narrow entrance on the south, is the rock called Lögberg. But it has now been established as a fairly authentic fact that the Old Mount of Laws was west of Öxarárhólmi on the brink of Almannagjá.

South of Öxarárhólmi, on both sides of the river are remains of ancient tentsteads, búðir, whose permanent walls were made of turf. To the touch of our hand the soft green turf is cool and aloof as if it would withhold from prying eyes the secrets of the past. But nevertheless our pulses quicken, our inward vision is sharpened by an upsurge of emotions, and all at once the Plain is peopled with glamorous figures enacting the intriguing dramas of the saga age.

One of them emerges from his tent. So well dressed is he that even here among this splendor of costly raiment all eyes are turned to gaze and admire. It is the tall, young and handsome Gunnar of Hlíðarendi, who has ridden to Althing fresh from his triumphs at foreign courts. He wears a scarlet robe, the gift of king Harold Gormson and on his arm the ring of gold, a token from Haakon Jarl. With his dauntless courage, with his physical strength and prowess in battle and all spheres of athletics, none could compare! Who then could be more popular at Althing than Gunnar? Mature men like to listen to this charming youth; young men avid for news of adventure, crowd around him; and the ladies! Ah many a one would forego her dowery rights to be the choice of such an hero. As Gunnar is strolling along a distinguished looking woman of rare beauty approaches him. She wears "a red skirt, lavishly embroidered with gold; her hair hangs over her bosom and it is well ornamented, and a scarlet mantle long and beautiful". She speaks to Gunnar, tells him she is Hallgerður daughter of Höskuldur Dala-Kollsson, and asks him news of foreign lands.

They talk a long time. Finally Gunnar asks her if she were promised to any man. Ah, Gunnar, the Fates weave swiftly and surely the web of Destiny. Of no avail the warning of Hrútr! Of no avail your own wisdom and logic! Yes, Gunnar, your renowned loyalty, friendship and self-control will be sorely tested. Your sword and your spear will bear the marks of bitter blood-feuds, and your fate will be sealed by the embittered soul of this proud imperious twice-widowed woman.

When Gunnar stands alone against a mob of murderous assailants; when his loyal brother Kolskeggur no longer stands beside him; when his bow-string is broken;— what price, Hallgerður, a lock of that lovely hair for a bow-string! what price! A man's life, your husband's life! Think Hallgerður, it is Gunnar, the daring, desirable Gunnar, whom you so boldly saught out as he walked on the plain of Thingvellir, in the prime of his manhood!—But she will not recall the youthful ardor; her mind is corroded with bitterness; she stares bleakly as, flung at her feet, lies a useless, broken bow!

Many a thrilling scene floods our mental vision, but one especially stands out as significant of the calm sagacity of the leaders of that by-gone era.

It is the year 1000, and Althing is divided into two armed camps ready to wage a bloody battle over religion. The missionary Thángbrandur, a special emissary of king Olaf, has the support of numerous powerful chieftains, among them being Njáll, Gizurr the white and Siðu-Hallur. Nine *goðar* have been refused a vote in the Assembly because of their conversion to Christianity. They now claim the right to sever their allegiance to the heathen *goðar* and form a new organization. Through their leader Siðu-Hallur, they obtain the services of the Law-speaker, Thorgeir **Ljósvertingagoði**, to draw up a code of laws for their side. The

situation is grave. A drastic political cleavage, perhaps civil war seems imminent. To Thorgeir the heathen *goði*, the most important issue is the welfare of his country. While seething unrest rages all around him, he retires to his tent for two nights and a day to make his momentous decision.

Thorgeir looks down at the expectant faces of the assembly summoned to Lögberg to hear his words. Whence comes his courage and his firm resolve? Did he perhaps during that long vigil in the night, say a silent prayer to that kind God of Justice he has been hearing so much about? And the throng looks up at Thorgeir. They trust him. So implicitly do they trust him that **both sides** agree to abide by the law he is about to proclaim! Then Thorgeir makes his historic plea for unity—and for Christianity. And so through wise and impartial leadership the peace and unity of a nation is preserved and Iceland stands unique in the religious history of the world as having adopted Christianity without bloodshed as the official religion of the land!

As we linger on at Lögberg to enjoy the sun-drenched quiet of a summer's day the image of another scene slips into focus in the mirror of our mind:

It is the 1930 millennial celebration. Thirty-thousand people on the Plain, bringing a renascence of its one-time splendor! Words of tribute on every tongue; and ringing in the glad hearts of Icelanders from all over the world is the joyous refrain "Iceland's Thousand years! **Íslands Þúsund Ár!**"

And so we say farewell to Thingvellir. At the lake we turn for one last look. We come to attention as it were, and salute this imposing Amphitheatre with its back-drop of snow-streaked mountains, where aristocrats of old staged the western premiere of a Peoples' Government.

Ballad Of Norse Freedom

By LAURA GOODMAN SALVERSON

The great grey peaks uplifted are ghostly still and dead;
The wending fiord is silver, the silver is my bed.

They plucked my heart asunder; they broke my life in twain—
But Freedom knows no dying; the free will live again.

He came at dawn, the German, what way he knew before:
The friendly mossgrown flagstones, the friendly cottage door.

He stood there calmly smiling, what time the bell tolled four:
And four we knew were dying; and one my brother Thor.

He stood there in the doorway; the bell tolled solemnly,
And death was there beside him, what time he looked at me.

The requiem bell was silent; my mother crossed her breast:
“God’s mercy be upon them in their eternal rest.”

“Good morning, Mother Solveig! The Herrenvolk repay!
The gallows tree is empty — your son was shot today!

“Your rebel husband, Solveig, a harder case was he—
Yet, for the good I owe you, he is safe in Germany.

“Misdoubt not, Mother Solveig, the Herrenvolk repay—
Your daughter, so befriended, shall bed with you today!”

Then spake my mother sternly — her eyes were cold as death,
And Death stood at her elbow and chilled her every breath:

“An that I once did save you, God show me pity mild—
The Hangman and the Hunter I took for foster-child!

“Now hear me, Master Hangman, and mark it well or ill:
The blood you spill in Norway stall flame from every hill;

“From every crested mountain and desecrated plain
The Varde of our fathers shall blossom once again.

“Then watch you, Master German, nor lie you down to sleep:
The vengeance of the Norsemen is bitter bane and deep.”

He stepped across the threshold, his smile was like a sword;
“Now be your life in forfeit, and that you know the fiord!

“The secret winding roadsteads, the serried cave beside,
Where outbound ships for England lie waiting for the tide.

"They shall not sail for England, they shall not reach the sea,
To harrass from her fountain the lords of Germany!"

Then spake my mother slowly, and strange it was to see
What time her words were bitter, her proud eyes smiled at me:

"To bind so fair a bargain, it needs be drunk in ale—
So fetch the flagon, daughter — You, hunter, hear my tale:

"They came to kill and ravage, and tried the pass you seek—
The ruthless Jomsburg Vikings— and bitter was the reek.

"The sun rose red: but redder, an awful sight to be
The corpse encumbered roadsted, that twisted to the sea.

"Then came the king to Guldal, with cross, and banner blue:
'No foe shall scale yon causeway; not one. So God be true!'

"Now drink you, German soldier; the sun is risen high:
The King's Rock stands out boldly against the stricken sky;

"The King's Rock tops the causeway; the trail is deep and cold—
Yet safer now, I fear me, than the men of old!"

He drank his ale, the German; what time my blood ran chill—
My heart, a bird, complaining against so bitter ill.

And hard his laughter sounder, and hard he looked at me:
"If Death stalks yonder causeway, then Sigfrid walks with me!"

Then spake my mother sternly; her voice was cold as ice:
An this be German justice, let be they have their price!

"Go swiftly, sun-bright daughter, nor shall you lonely be—
By King's Rock I'll be watching the dark course to the sea!"

Then stepped I from the roottree, the morning sun was high,
And grim the stately mountains stood watch athwart the sky.

The German had his hunters, a company of ten—
What time an I should lead to kill the Guldal men.

The path was steep and rubbed; the cliffs were sharp and sheer;
But now my heart untroubled; and now my duty clear;

By devious ways and winding, led on that murderous flock
Into the tortured causeway beneath the King's great rock:

The rock divinely balanced—and there by God's decree,
On watch against the foemen, to smite him utterly!

One thousand years of waiting, divinely balanced there:
And now Thor's bolt descending made thunder everywhere.

Swift justice of the mountain! It roared from peak to jeak—
What time the German struck me, and gashed my pallid cheek.

Sweet rue for so great splendor! For there against the sky,
My mother waved her kerchief—an Norway shall not die!

The earth was full of thunder; the air was rife with wings.
And came the Long Ships sailing, the helmsmen dread Sea-kings:

Fair Harold, and Saint Olaf, and Trygvasson the Great—
A falcon host resplendent, in strength immaculate.

What though my life be forfeit? The foeman shrieks in vain!
The justice of the Mountain recalls the Great again!

The sky was full of thunder; a long crap beckoned me—
And thence the deep fiord water, that bides eternally.

★ ★ ★

The great grey crags uplifted are ghostly still and dead—
The wending fiord is silver; the silver is my bed.

They plucked my heart asunder; they broke my life in twain:
But Freedom knows no dying—the Free will live again!

—————★—————

Old Sir Thomas Gresham, that shrewd man of business of Queen Elizabeth, coined a neat phrase: "Bad money will invariably drive out good money". I suggest that we go a little farther and lay down the law that bad politics will drive out good politics, just as bad music will drive out good

music, and bad manners will drive out good manners, unless the good politics and the good music and the good manners and the good everything else are forever watched over and protected by those who intend that the good shall prevail over the bad".

"Lewis", Hendrick Willem Van Loon.

The Icelandic Canadian

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The Literature of Iceland

(1000 to 1550)

By TRYGGVI OLESON, M.A.

Continued from June issue

II

A Time of Troubles

We then enter the second period extending from about 1300 to 1550, a period of terrible catastrophes, such as would have crippled any nation. Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions combine with famine and plague to crush the life of the nation. But this was not accomplished although that may be the general belief, I cannot agree with A. Olrik when he says "the nation that once had so sharp an eye for the world reality falls into slumber, politically, aesthetically, economically, sleeps its sleep of centuries, full of disturbing dreams, while the elves shriek their shrill laughter from all the cliffs and giants from all the caves, while the earth quakes and the fire mountains shine and souls fly about the crater of Hecla like black birds", although I admire the way he paints his picture.

A brief summary of the history of the period is necessary. Iceland was now subject to the king of Norway. Many times did the king attempt to increase his powers but the Icelanders never agreed to any extension of his authority. On more than one occasion notably in 1362 and 1502, they slew the king's emissaries. In fact one may say that during this period the king never became nearly as absolute as he desired. On the other hand the church did greatly increase in power. Several of the bishops, many of whom were powerful exploited the people but even they did not have everything as they wished. For example when bishop Jon Gerreksson became thoroughly intolerable, a band of men laid hands on him as he stood in front of the high altar, in his vestments, holding

the Host, stripped him, placed him in a sack and drowned him in the river. There was great internal strife especially towards the end of the fifteenth century and the English caused much trouble. Nothing points to a nation asleep and without vitality.

Yet there were numerous catastrophes that might have completely sapped the vitality of the people. Volcanic eruptions in the fourteenth century laid waste whole districts, some of which had contained as high as forty farms. Famines were common, for example they occurred in the years 1300, 1308-10, 1319, 1341, 1374-75. Terrible plagues afflicted the nation. The Black Death in 1402-05 carried off a third of the population, wiping out whole families. Whole districts were depopulated by the second visitation of the Black Death in 1494-95 and in 1512 the small pox again carried off great numbers.

And so to anyone who studies this period otherwise than superficially it will be revealed that both in the realm of literature and politics the nation yet possessed tremendous vitality. It is true that literary taste had changed somewhat. The great sagas had by this time all been written and writers therefore had to turn their energies to other matters, moreover Christianity had become fully domiciled and mens' minds were very much influenced by it. Saints had risen to a place of importance and were much venerated. Those in greatest favour with the Icelanders were the Virgin and St. Olaf and of course the national saints. Belief in the supernatural and in magic was quite in evidence. Fairies too, came to occupy an important place in the imagination of the people.

Literature of the Period

Literary labours turned particularly to transcribing the older Sagas, translating foreign romances and stories of the saints, writing the lives of a few of the later bishops, composing sagas about Icelanders from the saga time, the events in which were almost entirely fictitious, and writing annals. In the realm of poetry we have poems in honour of the saints, love poems, translations of foreign poems, poems to be sung at dances and finally the rimur.

To speak of the prose first. Of fine original work there is very little. The popular taste ran to romance and adventurous tales. This led to the composition of much of this sort. Some were modelled on the old Sagas and are rather fantastic, some on the romances of chivalry, most of them rather poor stuff. Several churchmen wrote or translated stories of the saints and there were collections of stories intended for edification. The language is not as pure as in the sagas but considering what deterioration had occurred in it, it must be pronounced rather good. The works of the churchmen indicate a very wide knowledge of, and much reading in, the literature of the Middle Ages.

Of historical works we have the histories of the bishops Arni Thorlaksson, Larenzius and Gudmundur Arason. The first two are very important documents regarding the history of the island, in which these two bishops played an important part. From the standpoint of literature they are inferior to the older "Lives of the Bishops". The third one is evidently written as a part of the attempt to secure the canonization of Gudmundur the Good. Besides these we have several annals, disjointed accounts, year by year, of the chief events both in foreign countries and Iceland. Some begin their account with the birth of Christ, some later, and go on to the

time of their composition. The later years are of course dealt with in much more detail than the earlier. As documents bearing on the history of the country they are invaluable but they cannot be considered as high grade literature nor are they intended to be such. They exhibit the desire for knowledge and the intellectual curiosity of the Icelanders.

Rimur and Vikivaki Poems

In the realm of poetry the rimur present an entirely new departure both as to verse form and subject matter. They first employ, the four line stanza and end rhyme which has become such a common verse form among the Icelanders. Amusement was their end. The subject matter is usually some tale either from the sagas, romances or lives of the saints. As time went on they grew longer and at the beginning of each "ríma" or division the poet would put in a few stanzas containing his own thoughts, usually on love. They were immensely popular as is attested by the unsuccessful attempts of the early Lutheran bishops to put an end to such compositions. It was after the middle of the fourteenth century that they arose.

Akin to these are the "vikivaki" poems. They were sung and people danced to them. Little is known of these poems and dances but many refrains have been preserved. These are often full of pathos and emotion and have a haunting beauty so often found in the literature which arises from the heart of the people themselves.

Religious Poetry

The greatest literature of the time is however to be found in the religious poetry. Today it does not make the same appeal to us it did in those days due to changed outlook and circumstances. In the fourteenth and fifteenth century it was the poetry and expressed the soul of the people. There is no

indication to be found in any of the writing that there was ever in Iceland at any time prior to the Reformation a quarrel with the teachings of the church. There were plenty of quarrels with the officials of the church as there were with the officials of the royalty. And woe betide the king or the church if they attempted too grossly to abuse their powers. Up to the sixteenth century the people continued to insist on their rights.

Of the religious poetry only that of two writers needs to be mentioned, the first is the *Lilja* of Eystein Asgrimsson in the fourteenth century. He was a monk of high position and involved at times in disputes with his superiors, without doubt an outstanding personality and a man of great ability. The poem is written in the old skaldic metre and consists of an hundred stanzas. The poet asks the blessing of God and the Virgin on his verse. He traces the creation of the world and mankind, the fall, the birth of Christ, His life in the world, and the last judgement. The poem is eloquent, intense in feeling. The feeling of pain and guilt is evident and very sincere but there is no whining or whimpering to be found. The author's faith is implicit and his passionate nature is evident. The words suit the thoughts and seem to be born of the thought. They are in complete accord. The language is excellent, pure and simple, containing very few foreign words. It is dignified where dignity is suitable, serious or humorous when the occasion demands. It is no matter of wonder that the poem was popular and that, as is said, "all poets would that they had written the *Lilja*".

Jón Arason

The second poet and the last of the pre-reformation ones, a man who has been called the Icelander, is Jon Arason. He was the last of the Catholic bishops of Iceland and one of the really great Icelanders having all the qual-

ties of the race an epitome of it, one might say. With his sons he died a martyr's death for his refusal to become an apostate and bow before the royal authority which was asserting its supremacy and which with his death was assured of victory. He reminds one of the great chieftains of old and as Finnur Jonsson says, with him ends an epoch in the history of Iceland.

His poetry with the exception of a few extemporary stanzas is all of a religious nature. It is of a high standard and bears evidence of the living faith and fire which animated the bishop. Besides these poems the Icelanders can be grateful to the bishop for the establishment of a printing press in Iceland. From it were to issue the translations of the Bible and other notable works.

Other fine poets existed at the turn of the century. In fact there sprang up a great literary activity at this time as the country recovered from the devastation of plagues, eruptions and famine. Some of the clerics were very learned men as for example Stephan Jonsson, Bishop of Skalholt 1496-1518, who had spent ten years in study abroad in France and other places. And no doubt much literature has perished for the Reformers in their zeal burnt many manuscripts. The period from 1520 to 1550 is one of the most important in the history of Iceland and we know it in great detail. It ended as is known with the triumph of Lutheranism and the royal power.

A Period of Darkness

And with that night settles on Iceland after a twilight illuminated by a few such productions as the translations of the Bible and the works of Arngrimur Jonsson. For two centuries Iceland is cut off, one might say, completely from the European tradition. With the trading monopoly the economic conditions are mildly described as deplorable while the literary

night is scarcely lit by a single star. One might mention Stefan Jonsson while some will want to add Hallgrimur Petursson. This gloom which encircles the country is lit by one ghastly light, the witch burnings, but they only serve to make the darkness more terrifying. The nation may be said to have lived on, downtrodden and without hope, consoling itself with its religion but yet terrified by its fear of The Devil and Hell, pinning its hopes, not on

anything in this life, hoping in fact for nothing from it but expecting its reward for suffering in another, until a few spirits resembling their Viking ancestors arouse the people from their lethargy and herald the dawn. The Saga isle wakes again to life, a life nourished as life had been in the darkest days on the living literature of her glorious past. But this and the present period are a subject for another article.



Merit Rewarded



H. A. BERGMAN

It is with pleasure that the Icelandic Canadian, in the following short account of their lives, pays its tribute to Hjalmar August Bergman, Winnipeg Barrister, and to Guðmundur Christianson, General Superintendent Indian Agencies, Ottawa.

H. A. Bergman was born in Gardar, North Dakota, August 22nd 1881. He is the second son of Ingibjorg Petursdotir Thorlacius and Erikur Hjalmarson Bergman. In 1888 his father was elec-

ted to the North Dakota Legislature, to become the first Icelander to sit in a Canadian or American Legislative Assembly.

At the age of eighteen Mr. Bergman received his B. A. degree from Luther College, Decorah, Iowa. Three years later at the record age of twenty-one he graduated from the University of North Dakota Law School. True to his father's example of leadership he won, upon graduating, the Keefe-Davidson Prize for the highest average standing in his class for the entire Law course. For a short time thereafter he practiced law in North Dakota but in 1905 the urge to break new ground brought him to Winnipeg. In that year H. A. was enrolled on the books of the Law Society of Manitoba as a student at law and articled clerk. He was articled to Thomas H. Johnson who later was to become Attorney General of Manitoba.

Already qualified to practice law in the United States H. A. was called to the Manitoba Bar in 1908 on the very day that he became a citizen of Canada. With that day began a brilliant legal career for the youngest partner in the firm of Rothwell, Johnson and Bergman. In his first year he set a record still unbroken by becoming the first

Canadian lawyer to appear before the Supreme Court as sole counsel for his client within twelve months of being called to the Bar. It was an auspicious beginning hardly dulled by the fact that he won an affirmative decision against F. H. Chrysler, one of the most distinguished Counsel of Eastern Canada at that time.

H. A. Bergman's renown in the legal profession spread rapidly and surely. Our brief space does not permit of more than a mention of a few of his many outstanding cases. Best known to most of our readers are, perhaps, the Thingvalla Church Case argued before the Supreme Court of North Dakota; the Tabernacle Church Case and the successful action taken by the Icelanders of the United States and Canada for commutation of the Ingolfur Ingolfson death sentence. The first two of these established important legal principles which stand to this day. More recently in a unanimous decision of the Supreme Court of Canada Mr. Bergman secured settlement of a far reaching principle of Constitutional law involving the rights of the provinces as against those of the Dominion. He has appeared before the Privy Council on two occasions.

In a career so consistently outstanding it would be difficult to select any one event more significant than the others. But H. A. himself would likely choose that of June 29th 1907. On that day Emilia Sigurbjorg Johnson became his wife. H. A. and Mrs. Bergman have three children, Ethel Ingibjorg May of Winnipeg; Captain Norman Stephen overseas with the Camerons and Pilot Officer Eric Herbert who on graduating September 3rd from the Air Observers' School at Stevenson Field led his entire class.

"As ye sow so shall ye reap." And H. A. has reaped a rich harvest of all those fruits of life which offer the deepest satisfaction to a man of his greatness. We can but mention a few. In 1920 he was appointed a King's

Counsel. For two terms, he was President of the Manitoba Bar Association. In May 1931 he was elected a Bencher of the Law Society of Manitoba. He has been re-elected ever since and at the end of the present term becomes a Life Bencher.

The Manitoba Government in 1933 appointed H. A. Bergman to the Board of Governors of the University of Manitoba. For the past nine years he has been vice chairman of the Board.

Of those Icelanders born here H. A. is considered one of the ablest in the Icelandic language. After many years of prominence in the affairs of the Icelandic community he was in 1939 made Grand Knight Commander of the Royal Icelandic Order of the Falcon.

In May of this year the Benchers of the Law Society of Manitoba elected H. A. their President. This Society is the governing body of the legal profession in Manitoba. Presidency is the highest honor the profession can confer.

—S. H.

* * *

Of Gudmundur Christianson it might be said that his course was charted from the time of his arrival in Canada. He was seven years old when he came here with his parents from Iceland. They first made their home at Lundar, Manitoba, but within a year moved to the Narrows, the first Icelandic settlers in that district, and there, on the more or less isolated shores of Lake Manitoba this little Icelandic boy began to lay the foundation for the future which lay ahead. Already he was learning one new language. Now, because most of his playmates were Indian children, he began to master another strange tongue—Indian.

Ten years from the time of their arrival in Canada, the Christiansons moved to Westbourne, Manitoba, where Mindy engaged himself in the store business, as well as exporting fish. During those years he had a large

Indian trade, so became still more familiar with their ways of life, more understanding of their problems.

In 1914 Christianson was appointed Indian agent at the Pelly Agency. Two years later came his first promotion, a transfer to the Qu'Appelle Agency. Another two years saw him Inspector of Indian Agencies, Grade 2, with head-

where he had charge of the Province of Alberta and the North West Territories. Work in this district entailed considerable travel by plane throughout the North West Territories and Western Alberta, as far North as Herschel Island.

In 1936 Christianson was appointed General Superintendent of Indian Agencies and moved to Ottawa. Due to the war and to the death of the Inspector in charge of Indian Affairs at Regina, he returned to Regina in 1940, and has been there since.

During the thirty years he has been with the Indian Department, Christianson has always had the interests of the Indians at heart. Feeling as he does, that the Indians are more than wards of the state, he is anxious that they should be given more opportunities. His personal interest in their welfare, along with his keen sense of duty to any tasks assigned to him has merited his continuous and rapid rise to his present position.

Mr. Christianson was married in 1907 to Mabel Allen Chantler. They have three children, Doris, married to Captain Wilbur J. Pallen, stationed at St. John, New Brunswick. Virginia, Mrs. Walter Hallatt living in Vancouver, and Barney, who is employed by the Department of Public Works in Ottawa. There are two grandchildren. — G.R.



GUDMUNDUR CHRISTIANSON

quarters in Regina, and two years later he was promoted to the position of the Inspector of Indian Agencies, Grade 3. In 1932 he was transferred to Calgary,

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Child Of Fear

By GEORGE SALVERSON

The strange two—the young girl and the old woman—were mysteriously united. You felt that, without understanding it. The old lady, with her blank face and half-blind eyes, who rocked and knitted imperturbably, withdrawn from the world by some malignant force, seemed hardly to exist; although you could see her at a glance if you walked into the semi-gloom of the grocery store. She was real, all right: you could hear her needles whispering in the corner.

And the girl with her sweet pathetic face was in some way equally vague, as though she were lost in time and space—as though her nineteen years were a dream, and not a pleasant dream, either. Strange, surely! For she was pretty, and as dainty as a bird. But her eyes, softly brown and made for laughter, had a perpetual, frightened look about them. A small, dark-haired little thing, with all the winsome charm of budding womanhood confirming her nineteen years, she struck you as old. Yes—old: because you would say to yourself (if chance and the need of tobacco enticed you into that gloomy store on the edge of town) here was a lovely young girl who had not laughed for years—a timid fawn of a girl who shrank at every pleasantry. But why? What was the cause of it? What was this gloomy light you felt in the very air?

Somewhere a door slammed—a gunshot in the silence. The old-young girl, bent above the leger on the counter, jumped as though struck, and glanced at her mother in unconscious appeal. But the old woman, imperturbable as gloom, kept on rocking; kept on knitting; the whisper of her needles the only answer she had. For what was there to say? What was there to do, but sit in doomed

patience, hoping and praying that the gloom and the silence would hide their fear—their helpless fear of the man she married that bright spring morning?

His step—how terrible it was! Heavy and forceful as the blows of a hammer; and every blow measured and slow, as if he meant to crush them to dust under his heels. The old woman shivered and knitted faster. The girl, forcing her eyes back to the neat figures that trembled on the white page, stared at them with dilating eyes. Nearer and nearer the dreaded steps pounded—so near, now, that a huge shadow fell across the ledger.

"You Listen to me!" The voice, guttural and harsh, had a contemptuous inflection.

Suppressing a shudder, the girl raised her soft eyes in mute acknowledgement, her face as white as the paper under her fingers. In her corner, the old woman stopped knitting, her lips a tight line of helpless misery. The man chuckled. It pleased him to see that whipped dog expression in human eyes.

"Listen, girl!" Old Reinhardt leered, "Better you hear right this time!"

Old Reinhardt, the grocer (Adolph Reinhardt, the neighbors would amplify with suspicious emphasis, as though to say: can you imagine a man named Reinhardt and Adolph in a land at war with Germany!) tall and heavy and repellent as his hulking shadow portended, towered over the frightened girl, his face expressionless, as granite, but the gleam of smouldering fanaticism lighting his steel-grey eyes.

"You, Olive! tomorrow the invoices must be in the mail. See that you work tonight until they are finished I will not have you deserting your

duty to squander time with that good-for-nothing Mary girl. I will check the work in the morning. Better you should see it is correct!"

Olive opened her white lips, breathing faintly: "Yes, father."

"Your mother—she will watch that you do not leave! I hold her responsible! Understand?" The voice, raised to a harsh bellow, made even the imperturbable knitter sit up and drop her busy needles, as though a sharp pain had struck her in the small of the back. Reinhardt wheeled.

"You, woman! Better you hear, and remember!"

The old woman picked up her needles again and said nothing. Grey, expressionless statue, only her hands were alive. Reinhardt stared at her fiercely, a speculative evil in his eye—a look the girl understood too well.

"Don't worry father," she cried. "I'll do as you say. Everything will be done on time."

Reinhardt, still glaring at his wife, shrugged contemptuously—and, without a word, withdrew. The tread of his feet was loud in the shuddering silence—the sharp click of the closing door, a welcome reprieve. Now they could breathe again, draw closer in the melancholy gloom that served them so often as a cover for the shame they dared not meet in each other's eyes.

"Mother," Olive whispered, "Let's go upstairs where it's more comfortable. He won't be back for a while."

She helped the old lady carry her cushion and her knitting, and to settle comfortably in an easy chair. Then in her haste to resume work at Reinhardt's roll-top desk, Olive shoved a stack of papers aside, and, in doing upset the arrogant statue that lorded it over the pigeon holes. White with terror, the girl caught the teetering bust just in time.

The old lady found voice at last. "Not yet, Adolph!" said she, and her

dull, flat tone seethed with the bitterness of restrained hatred. "Not yet!"

Olive had just got nicely to work, when the doorbell downstairs jingled with an almost impish glee. She knew that ring, and her eyes brightened—but their light blacked out, and a flush stole across her cheek. The figure on her father's desk froze every natural impulse.

"That must be Mary," said Mrs. Reinhardt.

Olive nodded.

"Go down, child. Thank God you have one friend!"

Like a timid mouse peeping out of its hole, Olive opened the door. As always, when her shy glance met Mary's warm, laughing eyes, the tension let up a little, and the glow of forbidden happiness lighted her face with unsuspected beauty.

"Oh—Mary! It's so nice to see you! Please come in—there's nobody in the store now."

"Little squirrel, you're coming with me! It's time you had some fun, and a party has sprung up!" Mary was al laughter, Olive thought—a vibrant, laughing goddess, in her dashing white uniform, and on her breast the symbol of liberty—a golden plane in a circle of blue, inscribed with fiery letters: "EAGLE AIRCRAFT LIMITED". Blond hair under a blue bandanna, and large blue eyes, crinkled with good will, yet with a silvery glint of steel in their merry depths—all this struck a note of awe and admiration in Olive's lonely heart.

"I'd love it, Mary—but I can't go out. Father left me the invoices to do. Thanks just the same."

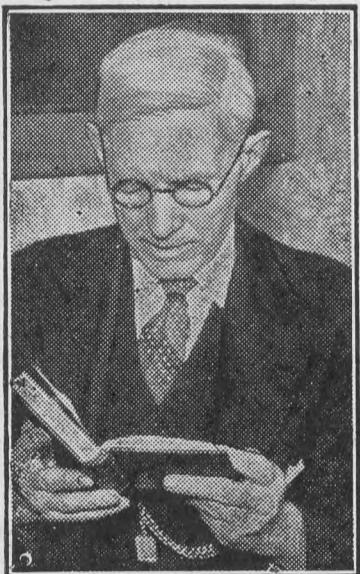
Mary's eyes flashed like a blade in sunlight. Phooey to father!" she gibed. "Little Squirrel, you can't work every night! Let me at the old bear. I'll tell him a thing or two!"

"Oh no! You mustn't ever!" Olive cried in alarm. "Honestly, Mary, I can't go out, anywhere!"

(Continued on page 33)

They Served Well

Once again our minds wander back to those who were with us but a short time ago. Three are selected this time; all served well and will leave "footprints on the sands of time" of our Icelandic community. They spent their lives in totally different environments, worked in fields far apart but yet have something in common. They gave of their best, each made a distinct contribution to the community in which he served.



JÓN JÓNSSON
1846—1943

In itself it is an accomplishment to live for almost a century, retaining full possession of all of one's faculties. But also to have been a pioneer and endure hardship, privation and loss as part of the rigors encountered in building up a new land, and still to have reached the age of ninety-seven years, is an achievement to be wondered at. Even more so when after the age of eighty-four a beginning was made at writing

memoirs and poems that have considerable merit.

Such a man was Jón Jónsson, pioneer from Iceland with the first Icelanders who settled the Lake Winnipeg district. He came in 1878 with other immigrants, floated down the Red River on a raft to the lake and on to barren Sandy Bar. Here he suffered his first sorrow in this land of hope and opportunity. He and his young wife, Sigriður, laid there to rest their youngest child. On from there they proceeded to the site of what became their home for the next twenty-eight years, Big Island, where out of the wilderness they helped to build a settled community, to build a settled Canada.

At the age of sixty, Jón, still in the pioneering tradition, sold his holdings on Big Island and moved to Shoal Lake and took up farming and again he prospered as before. Then he lived in Gimli for fifteen years, and thence to California where his wife died, bringing to a close many years of life together, years of adventure and of achievement.

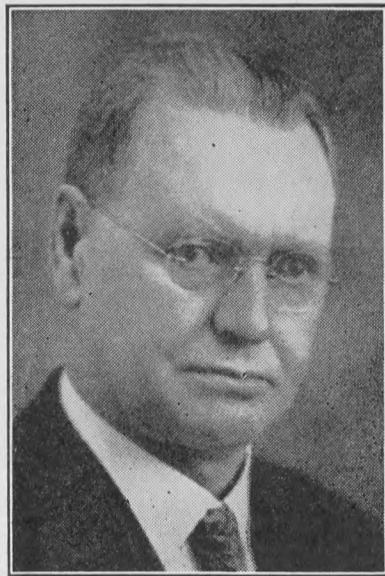
Jón, left alone, went to live with his daughter, Mrs. J. Sigurdson at the age of eighty-four. Still clear of eye and sound of limb, even at that age, he began to write memoirs, and odd bits of poetry. There he spent the sunset of his life, in peace and contentment, and there he quietly bade farewell on the 1st. of July, this past summer.



Dr. M. B. Halldorson, well loved physician who had practiced for many years in Winnipeg, died at his daughter's home, Mrs. K. Benedictson, in New York last July 8th. after a protracted illness.

Dr. Halldorson came to North Dakota from Iceland with his father in 1884. He studied at the University of North Dakota at Grand Forks and at the

Medical College in Winnipeg. His practice was carried on in Hensel and Souris, N. D., and then in Winnipeg since 1917. He carried on a general practice, but specialized in lung diseases, in which he advocated certain



Dr. M. B. HALLDORSON
Nov. 28, 1869 - July 8, 1943.

unorthodox methods not generally accepted here, although he received honors from the American Academy of Tuberculosis Physicians, and on several occasions was invited to deliver a paper before that organization. A medicine used in lung treatment bears his name and in Sweden a method of treatment developed by him is called the "Halldorson Method".

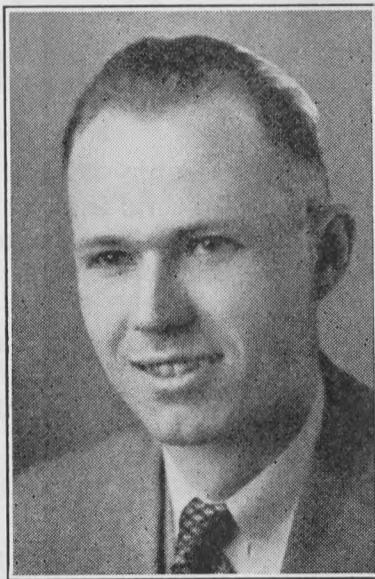
For many years he was president of the First Federated Church in Winnipeg and at the time of his death was Honorary President. Besides this he took an active interest in all activities of the Icelandic people. As a result, he was honored on his seventieth birthday by his friends at a banquet in the Marlborough Hotel, Nov. 28, 1939.

He was independent of mind, outspoken, blunt and straight forward.

He was kind and sympathetic. He was an individualist in the fullest sense of the word, and gathered about him a host of friends who valued his friendship, and who feel his going deeply.



It is with a feeling of mingled regret and pride that we think of Ingi Stefánsson a past president of the Icelandic Canadian Club, and one of its first as well as one of its most active and enthusiastic members Ingi Stefánsson, died in Winnipeg, at his father's home on Banning Street, just a week after the death of his father. He had come to Winnipeg to attend his father's funeral service, and had brought his wife, Fanney Victoria and their little daughter Thora Anna, with



INGI STEFÁNSSON
March 23, 1908 - June 13, 1943

him. He had been in poor health, but no one realized his illness was as serious as it turned out to be. His death came as a great shock to all who had been associated with him.

Ingi selected banking as a calling. He showed great promise and would have made a name for himself in that

field if death had not overtaken him so soon. He had won commendation from his employers, the Royal Bank of Canada, which he fully deserved. In the course of banking that he took through Queen's University, he had passed with honors, standing in second place for all Canada in the Associates Course, and in the fifth place in the Fellows Course. His earlier education was received in Greenway School and the Jon Bjarnason Academy.

He worked in the Royal Bank here in Winnipeg, and was transferred to Fort William three years ago. In Winnipeg,

he had been a member of the church board of the First Federated Church, serving as treasurer, and also of the Icelandic Club, holding the position of president when he left for Fort William in 1940. He had also been an active member of the Icelandic National League chapter, Frón.

The members of the Icelandic Club mourn the passing of Ingí. But they also take pride in the work he accomplished, the name he had made for himself and the service he rendered for the Club.

There Lie Our Dead

By SNORRI M. THORFINNSEN

'Neath sunny skies or gently falling rains
On coral isles, or jungles steaming heat,
On mountains bare, or far Tunisian plains,
On arctic shores where icy white caps beat,
There lie our dead — the lads who yesterday
Thronged in our schools, our shops, or fields of play
And joyful shouted as they worked, or played,
Who laughed at life, and faced Death undismayed.

There lie our Dead — and in the cradling arms
Of Mother Earth they find their common rest.
All hatreds done, all fears and all alarms,
Life's fevered brow by Death's soft hand caressed,
And we, for whom these loved ones gave their all,
Live, and must answer to that silent call
That asks if all they loved and left is gone
Or, if the things for which they died, live on?

—Mountain, N. Dak.,
May 30, 1943.

Our War Effort

★

Three Axford Brothers



Sub.-Lieut H. M. Axford



OS T. D. Axford



Lieut. Elmer D. Axford

★

SUB.-LIEUT. HERBERT M. AXFORD—Born in Winnipeg July 25, 1918. He enlisted in the R.C.N.V.R. in November 1942 and took his training at Toronto, Ont., and Esquimalt, B.C. He was transferred to St. John's Newfoundland in June 1943, where he now serves. He graduated in Commerce in 1941 from the University of Manitoba and was taking his Master's Degree at the University of Toronto when he enlisted.

★

ORDINARY SIGNALMAN THEODORE D. AXFORD—Born in Winnipeg, July 6, 1923. Enlisted in the R.C.N.V.R. in September 1942, and is now training at St. Hyacinthe, Quebec.

★

LIEUT. ELMER DANIEL AXFORD—Born in Winnipeg June 21, 1914. He enlisted November 6, 1940 with the Royal Canadian Corps of Signals, went overseas in April 1943 and is now serving with No. 1 Canadian Signal Reinforcement Unit in England. He graduated in 1937 with a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Manitoba. His wife resides in Winnipeg.

★

**SONS OF MR. & MRS. G. A. AXFORD,
WINNIPEG, MAN.**

Three Brothers from Selkirk, Manitoba



PO Marino Maxon Pte. A. H. Raymond Maxon Cpl. Frederick A. Maxon

★

PILOT OFFICER MARINO MAXON—Born at Polson, Sask., March 12, 1913. Enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force March 1942. Graduated as a navigator and received his commission in March 1943, and is now serving with the R.A.F. Atlantic Transport Group.

★

PRIVATE A. H. RAYMOND MAXON—Born at Selkirk, Man., May 29, 1919. Enlisted with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps June 1940 and went overseas in June 1941.

★

CORPORAL FREDERICK A. MAXON—Born at Selkirk, Man., October 22 1921. Enlisted with the Royal Canadian Air Force January 1942 and is now stationed at Sea Island, B. C.

★

**SONS OF MRS RACHEL MAXON AND THE LATE
MR. SÆMUNDUR MAXON OF SELKIRK, MAN.**

SHORT STORY CONTEST

The Icelandic Canadian Magazine will give an award to the best short story submitted. The editors will be the final judges and a award will not be made unless in their opinion it is merited.

Three Brothers from Lundar, Manitoba



Pte. Herman Johnson

Pte. Herbert Johnson

Pte. Herbert J. Johnson

★

PRIVATE HERMAN JOHNSON—Born at Mary Hill, Man., February 8, 1918. Enlisted June 1941 with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps. Trained at Camp Shilo, Debert and Halifax; now stationed at Fort Osborne Barracks, Winnipeg.

★

PRIVATE HERBERT JOHNSON—Born at Mary Hill, Man., May 9, 1921. Enlisted June 1941 with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps. Trained at Shilo, Man., and Debert, N. S. Embarked for overseas in October 1942 and is now serving in England.

★

PRIVATE HERBERT J. JOHNSON—Born at Mary Hill, Man., August 21, 1919. Enlisted July 1940 with the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada. Transferred to the Seaforth Highlanders of British Columbia. Trained in Winnipeg, Man., and Kingston, Ont. Embarked for overseas in October 1941 and is now stationed in North Africa.

★

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Sgt. Thor Sigurdson



Sgt.-Pilot Johann Sigurdson

SGT. THOR SIGURDSON—Born Lundar, Man., December 30, 1916. Enlisted R.C.A.F. May 1941. Took his training in Trenton and Toronto, Ont. Is now serving with the No. 12 Aeronautical Inspection District, Toronto, Ont.

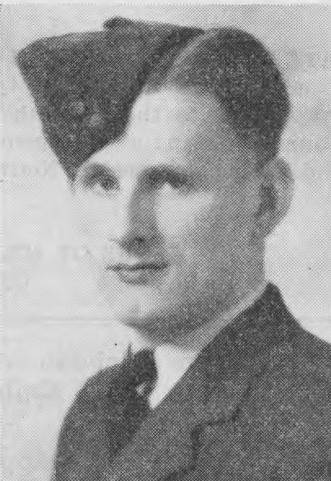
SGT.-PILOT JOHANN SIGURDSON—Born in Winnipeg August 1, 1920. Enlisted R.C.A.F. March 1942. Took his training at Edmonton and Calgary, Alta. Embarked for overseas May 1943. Is now serving in England.

CORPORAL THORDUR SIGURDSON—Born Lundar, Man., February 28, 1922. Enlisted R.C.A.F. September 1940. Trained in Montreal and Toronto; is now Wireless Instructor at Calgary, Alta.

AC1 GUDNI SIGURDSON—Born at Lundar, Man., February 28 1922. Enlisted R.C.A.F. November 1942. Trained at No. 3 Wireless School, Winnipeg, and later at Toronto. Embarked for overseas July 1943 and is now serving in England.



Cpl. Thordur Sigurdson



AC1 Gudni Sigurdson

Four Brothers from Steep Rock, Manitoba



Sgt. S. Thorsteinson



AC2 John M. Thorsteinson

SERGEANT SIGURSTEINN THORSTEINSON—Born in Winnipeg, Man., Dec. 30, 1917. Enlisted with the R.C.A.F. Sept. 1941. Took his training at Dauphin, Man., now stationed at McDonald, Man.

AC2 JOHN MARINO THORSTEINSON—Born at Langruth, Man., July 28, 1924. Enlisted with the R.C.A.F. December 1942. Stationed at St. Thomas, Ont., where he is taking his technical training.

CONST. INGIMUNDUR GUDJON THORSTEINSON—Born at Reykjavik P.O., Man., May 19, 1916. Enlisted with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, January 1941, and serving at Vancouver, B.C.

LAC VALDIMAR PAUL THORSTEINSON—Born at Lonely Lake, Man., March 12, 1920. Enlisted as aero frame mechanic with the R.C.A.F. Took his training at Macdonald, Man., and Paulson, Man., where he is now stationed.

SONS OF MR. & MRS. JOHN THORSTEINSON, STEEP ROCK, MAN.



Const. I. G. Thorsteinson



LAC V. P. Thorsteinson

Four Brothers from Virden, Manitoba



PTE. JOHN G. JOHNSON

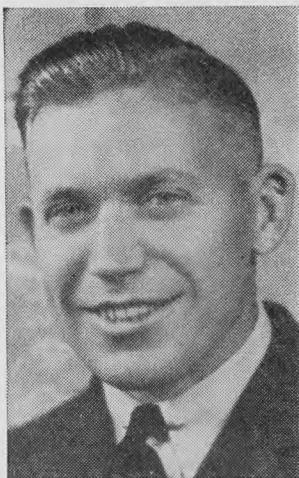
Born at Tantallon, Sask., February 22, 1906. Enlisted with the Canadian Forestry Corps March 1942. Took his training at Fort Garry Manitoba and Val Cartier, Quebec. Embarked for overseas in December 1942. Now stationed in Scotland.



Pte. S. N. Johnson

PRIVATE S. N. JOHNSON—Born at Tantallon, Sask., Oct. 2, 1909. Enlisted with the Royal Canadian Army Service Corps Nov. 1941. Trained at Fort Garry, Man., and Debert, N. S. Embarked for overseas in August 1942. Now serving in England with the 4th Canadian Ambulance Corps.

AC1 L. T. JOHNSON—Born at Tantallon, Sask., June 20, 1916. Enlisted with the R.C.A.F. as Aero Engineer Jan. 1942. Trained at Toronto, St. Thomas and Brandon, Ont. Embarked for overseas in January 1943. Served in England with a Fighter Squadron and is now in Africa.



AC1 L. T. Johnson

A.C. H. S. JOHNSON

Born at Tantallon, Sask., July 31, 1918. Enlisted in the R.C.A.F. as Aero Engineer June 1941. Trained at Toronto and St. Thomas, then transferred to Brandon, Man., where he now serves.



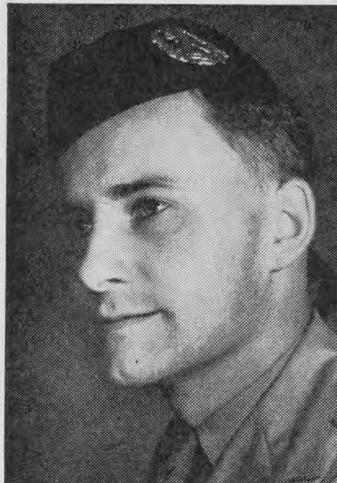
AC H. S. Johnson

SONS OF MR. & MRS. SNORRI JOHNSON, VIRDEN, MAN.

Three Officers

CAPT. NORTON JAMES ANDERSON

Born in Selkirk, Man., Dec. 2, 1916. Enlisted with the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada Aug. 1940. Embarked for overseas in Dec. 1940 and served there with his regiment until Aug. 1942, when he returned to Canada. He was appointed Public Relations Officer for Military District No. 10 and is now serving in Winnipeg. He received his education at Wesley College, and prior to enlisting worked for the Dominion Bank and later was engaged as feature writer for the Toronto Star and the Winnipeg Free Press. His parents are Mr. & Mrs. Thordur Anderson, Selkirk, Man. He is married to Miss Lucy Ethel Johnstone of Winnipeg and has one daughter two years old.



Capt. Norton J. Anderson



DR. VILHJALMUR JOHANN GUTTORMSON

Was Born at Lundar, Man., Dec. 8, 1916. He is the son of Mr. & Mrs. Vigfus J. Guttormson of Lundar, Man. He received his education at Lundar, and the University of Manitoba. He graduated from the Manitoba Medical College in March 1943. Prior to his graduation he had enlisted in the Canadian Army, and reported for duty immediately after receiving his Doctors degree; and is now stationed at Kingston, Ont.



F.O. Harold Blondal



Lieut. V. J. Guttormson

FLYING OFFICER HAROLD BLONDAL

Son of Dr. & Mrs. Agust Blondal of Winnipeg; was born in Winnipeg, Man., June 18, 1917. He enlisted in the R.C.A.F. as Radio Engineer in May 1941. Took his training at Toronto and went overseas in August of that year. He served in England till the spring of 1943 when he was transferred to India and is now serving with the Royal Air Force India Command. Prior to enlisting he had been attending the University of Manitoba and graduated in Electrical Engineering with a degree of Bachelor of Science in 1939. In 1940 he took Pre-Med. at the university, and in 1941 finished first year in medicine at the Manitoba Medical College.

In Memoriam



Killed in Action



F.O. Harold J. Davidson

F.O. HAROLD JOHANNES DAVIDSON

Was born in Winnipeg August 1, 1912. He enlisted in the R.C.A.F. in Aug. 1940, and took his training in Eastern Canada, Prince Edward Island and Saskatoon, Sask., where he graduated as a pilot. He embarked for overseas in October 1941. He was sent to Egypt early in 1942, and was reported missing on October 26, 1942.

Prior to entering the service of his country, he was connected with the T. Eaton Life Insurance Co.

His parents are Mr. & Mrs. Haraldur F. Davidson of Winnipeg, Man. His widow and one daughter reside in Winnipeg.

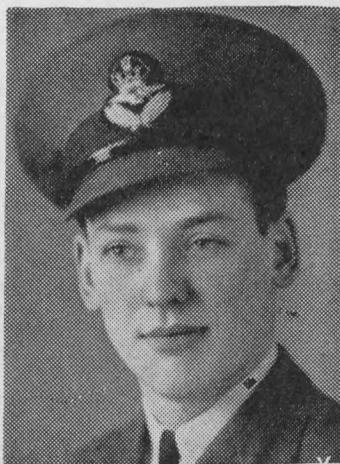


Reported Missing

F.O. DOUGLAS MAY SWANSON

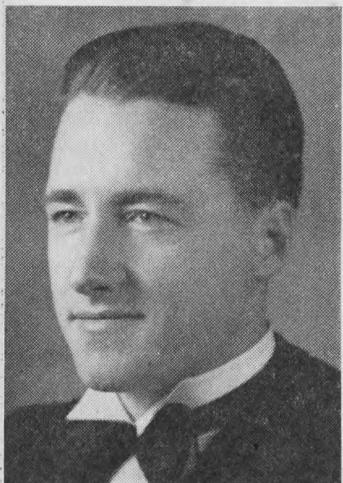
Born in Winnipeg June 23, 1917. Enlisted in the R.C.A.F. November 1940. He graduated from the Yorkton Service Flying School in October 1941, and embarked for overseas in December the same year. He served in Egypt, Syria, Iran, Irak and Malta. On April 18, 1943 he piloted a bomber out of Malta, with a crew of six, and was reported missing the next day.

His parents are Mr. & Mrs. J. J. Swanson of Winnipeg, Man.



F.O. Douglas M. Swanson

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Lieut. E. A. Olafson

LIEUT. ELLAF ARNI OLAFSON

Born at Shaunavon, Sask., October 2, 1915. Enlisted with the Royal Canadian Ordnance Corps and went overseas in September 1942. He took his normal school education in Saskatoon and taught various rural schools for three years. Entered the University of Saskatchewan 1938 and graduated as Agricultural Engineer in 1942. He was president of the Society of Agricultural Engineers of the University for the year 1941. He was one of five students selected from the Canadian Universities to be sent to Fort Knox, Kentucky, U.S.A., to take an advanced course in Tank Operations. While at the University of Saskatchewan he was an instructor of the Canadian Officers Training Corps. He was married in July 1942 to Miss Alexa Baxter of Foam Lake, Sask., also a graduate of the Saskatchewan University.

His parents are Mr. & Mrs. Arni Olafson, Eston, Sask., formerly of Gull Lake, Sask., and Hallson, North Dakota.



Lost at Sea



SGT. WILLARD A. ANDERSON

Was born at Selkirk, Man., July 21, 1914. Enlisted in the R.C.A.F. in Dec. 1940. Trained at Toronto, St. Thomas, Regina and Calgary. He was serving as wireless operator, air gunner at Coal Harbor, B. C., when he lost his life with the rest of the crew of a flying boat, that went down at sea, during a storm in August 1942. In civilian life he was an electrical engineer draftsman. He was the son of Mr. & Mrs. Thordur Anderson, Selkirk, Man.



Sgt. Willard A. Anderson

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CHILD OF FEAR

(Continued from page 19)

"Olive, child!" Mrs. Reinhardt's voice came whispering down the dark stair-shaft. "Your father won't be home until midnight. I'll do the invoices."

"Swell! You're a brick, Mrs. Reinhardt!" Mary called. I'll see she gets home in plenty of time. Come along, Olive, like a good Little Squirrel!"

"Oh—I know I shouldn't!" Olive objected, but she raced up the stairs to get her coat. "Am I all right, Mom?" she asked, eyeing herself diffidently in the hall mirror. Mrs. Reinhardt smiled, and the girl kissed her swiftly.

"Have a nice time, dear. Forget— everything," her mother said.

Olive caught her breath sharply. The statue on the desk loomed white and enormous beside her mother. The cold, stony face appeared to be leering at her. She tore her eyes away from the hated thing.

"Don't work too hard Mom. I'll be home early."

Mary lived two blocks up the street and tonight she had the house to herself. Light streamed from every window, and the living room was rhythmic with radio music. When the girls entered, a gale of laughter greeted them.

Mary's boy friend, a draughtsman from the plant, was practising jitterbug steps with a dusky whirlwind who might have blown in from the steppes of Russia.

"So that's how you carry on when my back is turned!" Mary greeted them. "Olive—meet the gang! But don't trust them!" She ticked them off gaily: a pretty girl named Rose and her soldier sweetheart; the dark girl, whimsically referred to as Little Egypt; and two other girls in the Eagle Aircraft slacks; their escorts; and lastly, obviously at loose ends, a tall young man in khaki, Randy Phillips.

"You two should get along," Mary

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concluded, "You're both bookworms. Take charge, Randy!"

"Hello, Olive." Randy's quiet smile was friendly and sincere. Olive smiled back shyly, her small oval face suddenly luminous, as though from an inner radiance that only he might share. That shy, appealing glance touched him inordinately. She was so little and sort of lost looking, as though she were half frightened of the free and easy gang, with its wisecracks and bubbling merriment. He couldn't quite make her out—and then, suddenly, as she slipped into the seat beside him and tucked her muslin skirt down neatly around her knees, he knew what it was made her seem so different. She was the kind of girl who ought to be dancing a minuet. She was old-fashioned, and sweet, and as feminine as a breath of wisteria.

After that they got on famously. He talked with ease, and Olive listened in a quiet rapture, as though his voice were music, and everything he said a delightful melody. Once her uneasiness had receded; her soft eyes lighted with unwavering interest, and little stars of quick emotion and exquisite sympathy. It was queer! He had started talking to put her at ease, but now he was telling her all about himself—even his tragic, orphaned boyhood; the struggle he had to get through high school; and the stubborn dream he nursed of making a name when the war was over.

"Oh, but of course you will!" Olive's face seemed to blossom with conviction. The delicate flush on her thin cheek made Randy think of white roses reflecting a June sunset.

Suddenly Mary was beside them. "I sure hate to interrupt this tete-a-tete," she twinkled, "But time flies. Half an hour, Little Squirrel, and the pumpkin coach will be at the door."

Randy looked mystified. Olive had gone white—dead—white and her eyes became bleak and miserable. "Yes

oh yes!" she said, and arose in obvious agitation.

Randy pulled her back. "Say what is this? What's the rush?"

"Sorry soldier!" Mary spoke sharply. "Little Squirrel has a hard-boiled step-papa with totalitarian complexes. She goes home at midnight, like Cinderella, or else!"

Olive gave a smothered little cry and ran for her coat. Her heart was thudding in her breast, and there was a queer constriction in her heart. She ought not to have come! It had been so lovely—a glimpse of a world she could never hope to enter—and he had seemed to like her!

"Olive! You don't think I'd let you go like this?" It was Randy speaking. He had followed her, and carefully shut the door to close out the din, or perhaps to help hide her confusion. "Can't I see you home?"

"No! No!" Panic rushed over her, obliterating the thrill of his attention. "I'd better not. I mean—Father would object. Please, Randy, don't ask why!"

"Look here, I don't like this at all!" he said, and, before Olive knew what was happening, his arms were around her, and she was clinging to him in mingled fright and joy. "Poor kid—why, Olive, honey you're crying!" He tipped up her face, and, sure enough, the soft, silky lashes were wet with tears.

A wave of protective tenderness caught him full tide: Aw, now, honey!" His voice was shocked, but the kisses he gave her made up for it. It made up for everything, Olive thought, in startled, sky-rocketing wonderment. Time seemed to stop, and, for an ineffable moment, nothing had meaning except the miracle of finding each other.

"You're sweet!" he whispered. "I'll never let you go!"

The whispered words shattered the illusion. Into the blue sky of Olive's happiness, there drew, like a storm-blown cloud, the dreadfull image that for so long, had haunted her, night

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and day. It was the unforgettable picture of her mother, crouched in a corner, hands pressed against the red welt that disfigured her face. And now, as always, the horrible welt grew and grew, filling her mind with a nightmare horror from which there was no escape.

With a cry that seemed to shudder up from her heart, Olive tore herself free. "No! No! It's impossible Randy!" she cried, and darted back into the living room, her one thought to get away before he could sweep away the remnants of her common sense.

"Mary!" she called—and stopped, frozen in her tracks. There was no laughter in the stricken room—only a cold, dark silence that emanated in angry waves from the huge, menacing figure that stood in the outer doorway.

Old Reinhardt, dark as a thundercloud, stood glaring at the dumbfounded young people with such a look of hatred that no one had mustered a word to say.

But now, catching sight of Olive, a sadistic glitter lit his stygian eyes. "So!" he rumbled, "This is how you work! How you keep your word! To stay home, where you belong!"

"But Mr. Reinhardt," Mary interrupted quickly, "I just asked her to come over for a cake I made for Mrs. Reinhardt. I'll get it in a minute!"

"Better not!" Reinhardt sneered. "Such lies I see through. Come, you!" he roared at Olive. "Of cakes and liars, we have enough. Come!"

"Why you old—!" Randy started forward, his shocked amazement giving

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way to blazing anger. But Mary pressed him back sharply. "Careful!" she hissed.

Old Reinhardt paused on his way out, and fixed his malignant gaze upon the startled young soldier. His lips made as though to speak, then clamped together in a hard, contemptuous line. Pushing Olive ahead of him, he stamped out, slamming the door with clashing violence.

Once outside, Reinhardt set off at a furious pace. For all the notice he took of Olive, she might not have existed. If only that were true! But she knew better. Half blinded by tears of shame, she stumbled along in his wake, every beat of her heart an agony of fear. She would not get off easily this time. Not this time. Not ever again. He must have seen how they loathed him—and he never forgot.

The dark bulk of the store rose up out of the night, one light in an upper window sending out a disconsolate, feeble glow that accentuated the all-pervading terror. Reinhardt tramped in, shutting the door behind him. Olive shuddered. If only she had the courage to break away! Looking back down the street, she could see, like stars of freedom, the glittering lights of the vast aircraft plant where Mary

worked. She thought of Randy, and felt his kiss on her trembling lips. Dear God, to be free! Free as the soaring planes that Mary helped to make—planes that flew to rescue poor oppressed people—to rescue them from the sort of living death that fed on your heart, and crushed your will to powder.

Again her mother's face materialized before her—with anguished hands outstretched beseechingly. Oh, no, there was no possible escape! No way but to endure and suffer and hide in shame. Bracing herself for what was to come, Olive entered the dark hall and trudged up the deep stairs.

Her mother sat in a far corner, clouded eyes fixed on meaningless space. Old Reinhardt stood by the desk, a gloating leer twisting his heavy features.

"Come here, you!" His voice had a note of mockery, and, for a moment, something like amusement shone in his eyes. Then, perhaps because her humility shamed him, the look changed to red rage.

"You slut!" he roared, and struck her across the face. "That will teach you obedience!" he said. "Both of you!"

(Continued in next issue).

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The Book Page

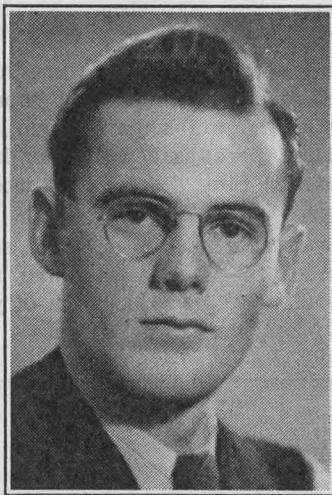
ATLANTIC MEETING

By H. V. MORTON

August 9, 1941 — In the opinion of H. V. Morton, this date is fated to be written in the pages of history and children still unborn will be required to know it together with the dates of the Magna Charta, the Declaration of Independence and other such landmarks along "the flinty road to Freedom". On this date, the chosen leaders of the two great English speaking democracies of the world met, not to divide the loot, or acquire new territories and greater dominion over Mankind,

but to prevent the enslavement of humanity.

ATLANTIC MEETING is an account of Winston Churchill's voyage on **The Prince of Wales** to a remote harbour in Newfoundland where he was met by President Roosevelt. During the four days that followed, the Atlantic Charter was drafted. The document is such a complete collaboration that it is impossible to trace which sentences are English, which American. At the time many of us were disappointed. We felt that this meeting should have meant the entry of the United States into the war on our side. But the two



BENEDICT VERNE BENEDICTSON,

son of Mr. & Mrs. Gisli Benedictson of Wynyard, Sask., was graduated with honors from the University of Alberta last spring, as a Bachelor of Science. Verne is now taking a post-graduate course in Meteorology at the University of Toronto, from where he will be posted to an airport to serve on the technical staff as a Meteorologist.



MRS. J. B. SKAPTASON,

"Fjallkona" at the 54th Icelandic Celebration held at Gimli, August 2nd, 1943. Mrs. Skaptason organized the Jón Sigurdson Chapter I.O.D.E. in March 1916. She was its first regent and when she came back to Winnipeg fourteen years ago, she was again chosen regent, which office she still holds.

leaders did not meet to make a treaty, they raised a Standard, just as the founders of the United States raised a Standard when they drafted the Constitution.

The author begins with an account of his summons to the Ministry of Information in London where he was told he was to "leave England for three weeks." He did not know where he was going, only that he would "see history in the making and be present at one of the great moments of the war." He, and the author, Howard Spring, were to represent the press on this important occasion. He had no idea of the nature of his mission until he saw Winston Churchill and his party board the train at a small station in the north of England.

There are many delightful personal glimpses of the Prime Minister in the book. "He possesses the ability to shut his mind at will either to work or worry and to live entirely in the present." The voyage was a holiday for him and he enjoyed every minute of it. The author describes him as having "mixed up in him Falstaff, Mr. Pickwick and Hamlet. What a mixture, yet what an English mixture!"

The reader is taken into the ward

rooms and officer's mess of a battleship in war time. We see the impressive Church Parade when the men of the British and American navies unite in a service of worship. There is a fleeting view of life in a Newfoundland frontier settlement.

On the way home, they stopped in Iceland, at that time the only land where British and American armed forces were working together. Mr. Churchill received a tremendous ovation when he stepped ashore at Reykjavik. To a man used to the strictly rationed English stores, the shops of this city were marts of luxury. One thing that impressed him was the large number of books in every language for sale. He says, "Iceland must be the best educated and most intellectually curious country in the world, if the number of books published per head of the population is anything to go by". Among the men stationed in



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Iceland "there is an extraordinary division of opinion on the subject of life in that country." The writer came to the conclusion that "their point of view largely depended upon their local contacts and social amenities. Some said that the Icelanders were charming; others that they regarded us as invaders and would have nothing to do with us." Mr. Churchill addressed a large gathering from the balcony of the Icelandic House of Parliament. He promised that "during the war Britain and America would defend Iceland, and after the war would guarantee her independence."

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ter included and of Mr. Churchill's description of the Atlantic Meeting. The book is illustrated with photographs taken on the voyage. H. S.

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